**Surrender of MTNL phones**

† 1672. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of subscribers of MTNL who have surrendered their basic telephone, WLL and mobile phone connections in the last three years and till date, year-wise;

(b) whether it is also a fact that MTNL and BSNL are lagging far behind as a result of tough competition posed by private companies;

(c) the annual loss being suffered by MTNL as a result of decline in the number of subscribers and the amount of loss suffered so far during the year 2005; and

(d) the steps Government are taking to improve the position?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The details of various types of MTNL subscribers who have surrendered the phones during the last three years are given below:

| Year | Land line | WLL(Fixed) | WL (Mobile) | GSM | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2002-03 | 1,71,238 | | 3,522 | 40,312 | 2,15,072 |
| 2003-04 | 3,77,242 | 3,180 | 17,025 | 2,03,566 | 6,01,013 |
| 2004-05 | 2,92,438 | 5,753 | 20,899 | 1,17,925 | 4,38,815 |
| 2005-06 upto 31.10.2005 | 1,57,530 | 5,637 | 22,421 | 48,094 | 2,33,682 |

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Sir, surrender of telephone is mostly taking place for land line connection and there is over all increase in subscriber base for combined land line and wireless technology. It is very difficult to assess the loss as surrender and new connections, both are continuously taking place. In fact, MTNL has made a profit of Rupees 938.97 crores during 2004-05 after deduction of tax. The number of connections working all inclusive (Land line connections and Wireless connections) in last 3 years are given below:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

| As on | Total numbers of working connections (Landline and Wireless) |
|---|---|
| 31.3.2002 | 4745207 |
| 31.3.2003 | 4981997 |
| 31.3.2004 | 4834486 |
| 31.3.2005 | 5153483 |
| 31.10.2005 | 5392204 |

It would be seen that number of phones are increasing except a small dip in 2003-04.

(d) MTNL is striving very hard to maintain the customers as well as increase the subscribers by taking various steps *viz.*, improving its network, providing innovating services at affordable prices to suit all segments of society, providing wireless connections of both Global System for Mobile communications (GSM) and Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) in line with the latest trend; improving customers relations and addressing to their needs, providing broadband services to its subscribers as per the global trend, etc.

**Universal Service Obligation Fund**

1673. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Universal Service Obligation Support Fund is not limited to Government companies like BSNL/MTNL;

(b) if so, whether private telephone operators are eligible for support from Universal Service Obligation Fund; and

(c) if so, the contribution of private telephone operators in the rural tele-density?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund is not limited to only Government Companies.

(b) The private telephone operators are eligible for support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).